

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

271348Z Apr 05

ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	CIAE-00	DODE-00	EUR-00	UTED-00	VC-00	TEDE-00
	INR-00	L-00	VCE-00	AC-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OMB-00
	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	SS-00
	TRSE-00	T-00	IIP-00	PMB-00	DRL-00	G-00	SAS-00
	/000W						

-----E6A961 290242Z /45

FM AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1456
AMEMBASSY PARIS

UNCLAS NDJAMENA 000666

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

PARIS FOR AFRICA WATCHER

E.O. 12958:N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ODIP](#) [AMGT](#) [CD](#)

SUBJECT: EVICTING FORMER AMBASSADOR SOUBIANE

1. (U) This is an action cable (see last para.)

2. (SBU) SUMMARY: The former Chadian Ambassador to the US continues to occupy the official Residence in Washington and has maintained control of the official vehicle despite the arrival of the new Ambassador, Chad's Foreign Minister and Presidential Advisor for International Affairs told the Ambassador April 26. Foreign Minister Yamassoum said the Government of Chad has revoked former Ambassador Ahmet Soubiane's Chadian diplomatic passport and formally advised the Department of State of his recall. The issue of his refusal to vacate the official Residence and return the vehicle is becoming disruptive to the good relationship between the two countries. The Chadian officials expressed President Deby's strong desire for a quick resolution. END SUMMARY.

3. (SBU) Minister of Foreign Affairs Nagoum Yamassoum requested the Ambassador to meet in his offices April 26 to discuss regaining control of the official Residence of the Chadian Ambassador and the Embassy's official vehicle in Washington. The Presidential Adviser for International Affairs, Ahmad Allam-mi, was present. The Minister told the Ambassador that President Deby had expressed a strong desire to see the present stalemate ended and his new envoy, Ambassador Bechir, installed in the official residence. Ambassador Bechir, presently visiting N'Djamena, made a brief appearance in the meeting.

4. (SBU) The Chadian Ambassador in Washington has hired a lawyer and is pursuing the issue in court, the Foreign Minister said. Allam-mi observed that the DC court would probably determine it does not have jurisdiction over a case involving a diplomatic mission. The Minister said that Chad believes it is the duty of the United States as host country to help the Embassy recover its property. He said the GOC was offended with the idea of being reduced to filing a court case like a private citizen, with no guarantee of success. "Since when does someone who has gone into rebellion against his own government use that government's resources to fight with?" he added.

5. (SBU) Presidential Adviser Allam-mi said that President Deby is quite concerned that this situation is being allowed to persist. The Government of Chad is asking that the Government of the United States take action, in the context of the Vienna Convention, to resolve a transgression of the inviolability of an official diplomatic residence. "The point has come where we need you to take some action. We do not wish this issue to become a political crisis. President Deby wants our relations to keep moving ahead."

6. (SBU) Sitting back and speaking more informally, Allam-mi added that the GOC has formally advised the State Department that former Ambassador Soubiane has been recalled and Ambassador Bechir is Deby's diplomatic representative. Soubiane's diplomatic passport has been revoked and no new Chadian passport has been issued. The GOC wants a quiet solution to the problem, one that doesn't involve them having

Soubiane and his children turned out on the street. That would likely lead to a duel in the press, in which the GOC would be obliged to publicize evidence it holds showing malfeasance and misuse of GOC funds by Soubiane. No doubt it would also be necessary to explain the GOC's view that the State Department had been uncooperative in finding a solution, Allam-mi continued. "We prefer a less inelegant solution."

17. (SBU) Growing more animated, the Minister asked if Chad could send gendarmes to assure the security of GOC property. "Should the GOC request Uniformed Secret Service intervention to eject an intruder?" he

SIPDIS
said.

18. (SBU) Ambassador Wall assured the Minister that U.S. respect for the Vienna Convention was not in question. Though he understood well the GOC's concern with an unusual situation, and knew that U.S. authorities were also concerned, these were matters of law, and it was wise that the Chadian Mission had retained an attorney. The court action was the right way to proceed. It would not be possible for the State Department to instruct the police to evict the former Ambassador. Under U.S. law this was a civil matter that would have to be resolved in the courts. With regard to the official vehicle, since it is registered to the Embassy and Soubiane is demonstrably no longer a functionary of the embassy but rather a private citizen, the next step appeared to be to seek a court order to seize the vehicle and return it to its owner.

19. (SBU) Allam-mi replied that the GOC understood Soubiane had applied, or would soon apply, for political asylum. "Why not move him to wherever applicants for asylum are held?" asked Allam-mi. "Is he not in violation of his visa?" Soubiane made political statements against his government and it was perfectly normal that he be recalled, he added. The issues regarding misuse of funds were the GOC's problem, but the issue of a squatter in a diplomatic residence would best be handled in diplomatic channels, from the GOC's point of view.

110. (SBU) COMMENT: This was an unusually negative exchange, and both the Minister and Allam-mi were clearly under orders to convey Presidential displeasure. They are certainly right that neither the U.S. nor the GOC would benefit from making this a politicized press case, which is what Soubiane is no doubt seeking. In addition, it is not out of the question that Embassy N'Djamena might well be subject to diplomatic harassment such as a slow-down in fuel tax exonerations, less enthusiastic protection of the Chancery, or slow visa approvals. In an environment of constantly improving cooperation, this would be unfortunate, and appears avoidable.

111. (SBU) We are not in a position to know the legal situation, but it seems reasonable that the GOC could file with the police for eviction of an unauthorized tenant and recuperation of a stolen vehicle, if it has not already done so. Our understanding is that, acting in coordination with an agent from the DS Washington Field Office and perhaps an agent of the Secret Service Uniformed Division, the police would

SIPDIS
be able to carry out the action with no injury to the Vienna Convention. However Washington decides to proceed, it appears from today's meeting that the longer the situation is allowed to persist, the more the issue will become a matter of face for the GOC (and by extension, the embattled President Deby) and the less flexibility we can expect on the part of the GOC.

112. (U) Action Request: Please provide guidance for replying to the Minister's questions on next steps to evict Soubiane.

WALL

NNNN